

## Chapter 10

### Company management, 1883-1906

*The theoretical education of brewery managers has become an indispensable prerequisite, and the larger establishments even find it useful and necessary to employ zymotechnic specialists or brewing chemists to control the practical operations by an analytical examination of the brewing materials, etc. Science has ceased to be the last resort in cases where practice had failed...*

H.S. Rich & Co. One Hundred Years of Brewing (1903)

By the time Robert Portner's brewery was incorporated in 1883, its management was no longer a one-man or two-man job. Its expansion and far-flung distribution system were simply too complex to handle, especially when the owner was ill or absent. Indeed, sharing the burden had been one of the principal reasons to constitute a board of directors. It would be unfair to the men who assisted Portner to pass over them without at least a brief mention of their histories.

Like any boss, Portner relied on his employees. Not formally trained as a brewer, he gradually picked up a practical knowledge from his succession of brewmasters, but never presumed to handle the brewing himself. He was absolutely dependent on the earliest master brewers, Andrew Kaercher and Carl Wolters. His sixth (and eighth) master brewer, Paul W. Mühlhauser, arrived in 1871 recommended by Anton Schwarz, the founder of a New York brewing school. Mühlhauser (sometimes written "Mulhauser") was born at Wurtemberg, Germany in December 1849. Educated at Stuttgart, he immigrated to the United States around his eighteenth birthday. He may have been related to the Baltimore brewing family that included Jacob Muhlhauser, owner of the Civil War-era Albion Brewery.<sup>1</sup> Mühlhauser remained with the Alexandria brewery for more than seven years, near the end of which he developed the "Tivoli Cabinet" beer that would be the company's most popular brand for two decades. He then fulfilled the dream of every brewer—that of opening his own brewery. By the end of 1878 Mühlhauser had joined Franz Thau as junior partner of the Crystal Springs Brewery in Baltimore. In 1881, Elias E. Adler purchased Thau's share and renamed the business the Enterprise Brewery. Compared to Alexandria, Baltimore was a major brewing center, producing about 200,000 barrels in 1878-1879, but spread among nearly 40 plants.<sup>2</sup> While with the firm, brewmaster Mühlhauser patented an "apparatus for observing the quality of liquids in kegging." But the partners were accused of infringement on another company's patent for some improvement in fermentation—an improvement that they claimed to have developed independently. The partnership ended in 1883, possibly brought about by another dispute, that between Adler and Robert Portner over the performance of one of the latter's refrigeration machines. Mühlhauser made a separate peace with his old boss in 1882, but Adler remained in court for several years (see page 93). (Portner

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<sup>1</sup> There were also two Mühlhausers who ran breweries in Cincinnati and Portsmouth, Ohio. (Van Wieren 1995: 271,286)

<sup>2</sup> The production figures for the Thau and Mühlhauser brewery are not readily available. (Salem 1880:213)

n.d.:13-14; *The Sun* April 26, 1882, June 5, 1882; *Alexandria Gazette* August 21, 1890; Schenk and Froelke 2002:249; Van Wieren 1995:130,132,286; Salem 1880:212-213; Kelley 1965:173)

Replacing Muhlhauser in Alexandria was John Kohout, a 33-year-old Bohemian brewer who had arrived in the United States a decade earlier and resided in Virginia from at least early 1871. He was Portner's master brewer until 1882, when he was reported to be relocating to one of the large Milwaukee breweries. But the often nomadic nature of a brewmaster's life left him not in that brewing Mecca but in remote South Butte, Montana by 1891, the superintendent of that town's Centennial Brewery. Robert Portner lured back Paul Muhlhauser, tendering the job of vice president and superintendent of operations for the new corporation, plus a new office directly behind the plant and the use of the recently vacated Portner family house on the property—rather than the more humble dwelling just erected for Kohout. Muhlhauser had maintained an amicable relationship with his former boss, in spite of the dispute between Portner and Adler; his wife, after all, was Portner's niece, Louise Strangmann. Muhlhauser was now present during the company's greatest period of expansion and was handsomely compensated.<sup>3</sup> He was undoubtedly responsible for developing some of Portner's principal products, not only including Tivoli lager, but also the company's first bock beer, in 1887, and possibly a dark "Culmbacher" beer (see pages 163-164). But he perished of diphtheria in 1890, his funeral well attended, including by many old colleagues from Baltimore.<sup>4</sup> (United States Census 1880b; *Alexandria Gazette* December 26, 1882 and August 21, 1890; R.L. Polk & Company 1891b; R.L. Polk & Company 1902; United States Census 1900c; Portner n.d.:19; Kelley 1965:173; H.S. Rich & Co. 1903:220; Alexandria Corporation Court Charter Book 3; *The Sun* August 23, 1890)

Joseph Schneider succeeded Paul Muhlhauser in 1890. "[H]e proved to be a very efficient man; the beer which he brews is very good." Evidently also a popular man, he nonetheless remained little more than a year before accepting a position as foreman with the Indianapolis Brewing Association. Because the output of the Portner brewery had grown to about twelve times the amount produced when Muhlhauser began, Schneider confined himself to supervising the brewing and was apparently not a company officer. (Portner n.d.:23-24)

In 1886 Portner installed a general manager, 35-year-old Frank P. Madigan, to handle much of the financial and logistical end of the business. Madigan, a Washington native, had been the D.C. agent for New York's "Bradstreet's Improved Mercantile Agency," a commercial credit rating firm and the forerunner of Dun & Bradstreet. He was soon in charge of the Washington segment of Portner's beer market as well as a director of the brewery. Madigan was to head up a new plant to be built on Maryland Avenue in Washington in 1888, but Portner, having partnered with Albert Carry, decided to forego those plans and instead open the National Capital Brewing Company. Madigan served as one of the new brewery's directors until 1895. Although he was not with the Portner brewery long, Madigan is nonetheless a significant figure, if only because he was the first non-German to serve as an officer with the company. One of his principal duties


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<sup>3</sup> Muhlhauser held \$10,000 worth of company stock. Later, the *Washington Post* reported that Muhlhauser's annual compensation was \$10,000—a princely sum and likely simply confusion with his stock holdings. (*Washington Post* August 25, 1890)

<sup>4</sup> The extant death record indicates that the cause was tuberculosis—perhaps unlikely because of the suddenness of his passing. (Pippenger 1995:228)

was lobbying. He represented breweries and other purveyors of liquor before the Commissioners of the District of Columbia as the latter debated stricter saloon regulation in the early 1890s. Charged with the defense of their licenses, he was one of the founders of Citizens' Committee of the Federation of Retail Liquor Dealers of the District of Columbia. He also spoke for businessmen and residents of those portions of the District served by the Baltimore & Potomac Railroad tracks and depot when the Commissioners proposed to remove the same in 1890. When Portner consolidated his Washington business with that of Albert Carry, Madigan joined the National Capital Brewing Company and remained an officer (with \$10,000 worth of stock) and executive of that firm until his 1916 death by massive stroke. (Portner n.d.:23-24; *Alexandria Gazette* August 22, 1890 and November 29, 1891; *Washington Post* August 9, 1886, December 15, 1887, April 19, 1889, May 17, 1889, August 10, 1890, October 19, 1890, October 23, 1890, April 15, 1891, April 25, 1893, September 12, 1895 and June 22, 1916; Boyd's Directory Company 1886; Boyd's Directory Company 1890; Boyd's Directory Company 1893; Boyd's Directory Company 1895; *Evening Star* February 28, 1890)

Madigan replaced on the Portner company board one of its original members, Bette Edward Julius Eils (known as "Edward" or "B.E.J."), who had joined the grocery of Portner & Recker at the end of 1861. Born at Tengshausen in the Grand Duchy of Oldenburg in 1840, Eils arrived at New York on Christmas 1859. Joining Portner & Company as a clerk, he became an important figure to the successor brewing corporation. But first, he left Portner's employ by 1867 to become a patent attorney in downtown Washington. Nonetheless, Eils looked after the brewery and his former boss's other interests when Portner departed for Germany in 1881 to recuperate from an illness. Eils assisted Portner with his artificial refrigeration experiments and was co-patentee of Portner's air cooling device. As patent attorney and tinkerer, he also patented a harvester part, an improved boiler-pressure gauge, systems for transmitting simultaneous but distinct telegraph messages, and a bottle-cap feeder—and, of course, witnessed dozens more applications. He received some of the profits of the failed refrigeration systems venture (see Chapter 7) and was appointed to the Portner company's board in 1883. In the mid 1880s he became secretary of the Hecla Architectural Bronze and Iron Works in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn and fifteen years later was secretary of the executive committee of the New York area's Iron League, the protective "union" of the iron and steel manufacturers. The Hecla foundry may have had a hand in fabricating Portner's early refrigeration machines and, as it specialized in fabricating architectural elements, Eils had the available facilities and skilled labor to patent innovations in the construction of steel columns, steel grilles, and fireproof partition

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walls. (Portner n.d.:7,17,19; Department of State; Boyd 1867; Boyd's Directory Company 1874; Boyd's Directory Company 1885; Chataigne 1886; United States Patent and Trademark Office 2006; Alexandria Corporation Court Charter Book 3; H.S. Rich & Co. 1903:556; Lain & Co. 1889; Reid Family Papers; Biographical Directory Company 1900:124; *New York Times* November 22, 1895)

Rounding out the original board of directors was Charles Gustave Herbort, the first manager of the brewery's Augusta, Georgia depot (1881) and of the firm's Richmond bottling branch from 1885 to 1888. He owned \$5,000 worth of company stock. (Sholes & Co. 1881; Sholes & Co. 1882; Portner n.d.:19; Alexandria Corporation Court Charter Book 3; Chataigne 1885b; J.H. Chataigne & Co. 1888a)

After Joseph Schneider departed for Indiana in 1891, Robert Portner needed a new brewmaster.

My next desire was to find a young efficient brewer for the Alexandria brewery who was engaging and had at the same time some business experience. I found such a person in John M. Leicht, who owned a brewery in Newburg[h], New York. He bought 250 shares for \$250 each, paying \$25,000 in cash and the rest in notes, and became vice-president of the R. Portner Brewing Company with a salary of \$3,000 a year. (Portner n.d.:24)

Leicht was the 35-year-old son of Bavaria native Andrew Leicht, part owner of a New York City brewery from 1856 to 1858 and a prosperous partner in the Hudson City, New Jersey firm of Roemmelt & Leicht from 1857 to 1879. Andrew's three sons, Charles K., William and John, followed their father into the trade. In 1879, John and Charles purchased a two-year-old plant in Newburgh, New York, which Charles retained after John joined the Portner company.<sup>5</sup> John Leicht was a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and had done post-graduate work at Columbia and also managed to be associated with breweries in Milwaukee, Cincinnati, St. Louis and Boston, presumably learning the ropes prior to partnering with his brother. Robert Portner thought highly of Leicht, and they grew close; Leicht's wife, Eugenia, even became the godmother of one of the Portner children. And Leicht struck up a fast friendship with fellow board member Carl Strangmann. (Department of State; United States Census 1870d; H.S. Rich & Co. 1903:259,282,448; *Alexandria Gazette* [1894]; Van Wieren 1995:49,465)

Carl Augustus Strangmann was born at Rahden, Westphalia in May 1860, the son of Robert Portner's eldest sister, Augusta. He emigrated in 1875, arriving in New York and working for less than a year at a grocery, possibly Louis Portner's. He then came south to join the brewery. Familiarly known as "Charlie," he worked in the brewhouse for two years before being appointed office and shipping clerk, probably responsible for filling orders and then perhaps for coordinating the logistics of shipment to the company depots. Portner already trusted his nephew to help Edward Eils run the brewery during his 1881 absence. As most breweries were then still family businesses, there is a sense that Robert was grooming Strangmann to lead the firm—at

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<sup>5</sup> Another source states that John Leicht and his brothers first started a brewery in New York in 1880 and *then* moved to Newburgh. (*Alexandria Gazette* [1894])



*Two images of the impressively mustachioed John Leicht from One Hundred Years of Brewing (1903), left, and an 1894 supplement to the Alexandria Gazette, right.*

least until Portner's sons were old enough to assume management. When the business incorporated in 1883, Strangmann was appointed to the board and accepted the position of secretary and treasurer and "general business" and "operations" manager. Particularly during Portner's absences, Strangmann served as chief executive officer. He is the signatory, for instance, of many of the company's land records and agreements and, as an important business leader, was one of founders of Alexandria's Board of Trade. Portner again felt that the business was secure enough under Strangmann's supervision to leave for a two-year stay in Europe, September 1888 to August 1890. Until 1894, in fact, the company prospered, permitting its remarkable expansion. But although Portner attributed a downturn of the mid 1890s largely to the economic depression that had seized the country, he had also grown dissatisfied with his nephew's performance. "I myself took over the management of the brewery because it had not been run according to my wishes. Upon my request, Carl Strangmann resigned his position as secretary and treasurer." (*Alexandria Gazette* October 4, 1915; Mueller 1912:12-13; Portner n.d.: 3,17,19,20-23,26,27; H.S. Rich & Co. 1903:239; Alexandria Corporation Court Charter Book 3:27; Alexandria Board of Trade n.d.)



*Carl Strangmann as depicted circa 1905, left, and circa 1900, while president of the German-American Brewing Company of Buffalo. Images from the Memorial and Family History of Erie County, New York and One Hundred Years of Brewing.*



Strangmann's reaction was to associate himself with a new "Norfolk Brewing Company" at the end of 1895. Intending to manage the proposed plant, he spent some time in Norfolk assisting with the filing of incorporation papers and trying to locate a production site with a good water source. Any Norfolk brewery would compete directly with the Portner's, as much of the latter's product was distributed to that area, the location of the company's second depot. For whatever reason, Strangmann did not remain with the new firm—which presumably became the Consumers Brewing Company<sup>6</sup>—and instead, sojourned in Germany. Upon his return, Portner bought out his shares of the Alexandria brewery and those of his sister, Louise Muhlhauser, "of which there were two hundred, paying \$175 each." (*Alexandria Gazette* December 3, 1895; Portner n.d.:27; *Washington Post* January 17, 1896)

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<sup>6</sup> The Consumers Brewing Company, at Church Street and Washington Avenue in Norfolk, was founded by Colonel C.A. Nash and others in 1895. The plant had an initial annual capacity of 40,000 barrels. It closed at the institution of Prohibition in Virginia. A firm by the same name in Rosslyn, Alexandria (Arlington) County, Virginia changed to the Arlington Brewing Company in order to avoid confusion. (H.S. Rich & Co. 1903:477; Bull, Friedrich and Gottschalk 1984:306)

Naturally, Strangmann decided to take his money and start again elsewhere. He convinced his friend John Leicht to cash in his own company stock and join him in running their own brewery. Strangmann, his widowed sister, and Leicht all moved to Cleveland, Ohio where they purchased George V. Muth's Star Brewing Company. In 1897-1898 the plant was one of nine in Cleveland and Sandusky purchased and merged into one corporation in the wave of consolidation spurred by the entrance into the industry of English investor syndicates. Leicht was elected "second vice-president" of the new corporation in December 1899. Strangmann went his own way, buying an interest in the fourteen-year-old German-American Brewing Company of Buffalo and becoming its president and "guiding spirit" in 1899. Although a much smaller plant than Portner's, its output increased by about 167 percent during the first three or four years of Strangmann's tenure. He served as an officer of the United States Brewers' Association and a trustee of the New York State Brewers' Association. He died of heart failure at age 55 in 1915, leaving an impressive home and "one of the finest private libraries in Buffalo." Shortly after his departure from the Portner company, Strangmann's younger brother, Robert, joined the brewery as cashier at its new Frederick, Maryland depot and was soon elevated to its manager, remaining in that capacity until the company's demise.<sup>7</sup> (Portner n.d.:30; H.S. Rich & Co. 1903:239,412,484; *Alexandria Gazette* May 27, 1896, December 23, 1899 and November 11, 1915; Mueller 1912:13; *The News* April 16, 1897, February 28, 1898, October 30, 1915 and December 20, 1916)

Portner replaced Carl Strangmann with 35-year-old Percy McKnight Baldwin as secretary-treasurer. As a young man, Baldwin had worked in the Alexandria freight office of the Southern Railway Company. He was later promoted to the railroad's general office in Washington. Portner likely hired him for his expertise with moving rail freight, possibly bringing him on as a shipping clerk as early as 1888. Brewing had long since ceased being a craft; it was now a large capitalist enterprise. Logistical and financial managers like Baldwin, accountants and auditors E. Frank Downham, John T. Sweeney, John T. Johnson and John M. Johnson,<sup>8</sup> and "general agent" Martin P. Greene became increasingly important figures in the business. (Portner n.d.:27,30; *Alexandria Circuit Court Deedbooks*; the Lyceum; *Alexandria Gazette* December 20, 1898 and November 22, 1920; W.L. Richmond 1907; Hill Directory Company 1915c)

On the brewing side, John Leicht was replaced with Dutchman Peter von de Westelaken, the first non-German brewmaster.<sup>9</sup> Demonstrating the dominance of the managers over the craftsmen during this period is the fact that Westelaken never served as a vice-president as had his

<sup>7</sup> Robert C. Strangmann was born February 9, 1864 and emigrated in 1879. He was living in Alexandria when naturalized in 1891, and was presumably then associated with the brewery. (Department of State)

<sup>8</sup> Sweeney was a native of Alexandria, born in 1853, educated at St. John's Academy, the son of a grocer who became a clerk for the Southern Railway before joining the brewery in 1896. He served on City Council for nearly 25 years and also was a School Board member before becoming an alderman. (*Washington Post* April 17, 1907) As the representative of the brewery, John T. Johnson was the first vice-president of the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce. Born in King George County, Virginia, he came to Alexandria as a youth. For several years, he served as a clerk to the Alexandria Common Council before being elected to Council himself. (*Alexandria Gazette* September 7, 1906)

John M. Johnson also served on the Board of Visitors for the Medical College of Virginia at Richmond. (*Alexandria Gazette* March 24, 1915)

<sup>9</sup> His name also appears as van de Westelaken, von de Westerlaken, and simply Westelaken. The "von" may have appeared during his career among German brewers.

predecessors Leicht and Muhlhauser. Baldwin and Greene remained with the company until statewide Prohibition took effect in Virginia in 1916. Westelaken resigned in 1915 because of ill health. He recovered after a vacation, accepted a position with the American Beverage Company of Canandaigua, New York, and died in 1918 at his home in Buffalo.<sup>10</sup> (W.L. Richmond 1907; Hill Directory Company 1915c; *Washington Post* September 22, 1905, April 7, 1911, March 16, 1915 and December 15, 1918; *Alexandria Gazette* March 17, 1915, March 30, 1915 and September 15, 1916)

*Peter W. von de Westelaken, the Portner Company's penultimate brewmaster, served on Alexandria's George Washington birthday celebration planning committee for a decade and was a prominent member of the Alexandria chapter of the Fraternal Order of Eagles. He was a famously congenial and portly man; the Eagles staged a humorous charity footrace between their heaviest members, and Westelaken was given the longest odds to win—300 to one.*



With the shake-up at the top in 1896, Robert Portner again assumed direct control of operations, and “under my management, the business was doing much better, we made \$68,000, and paid a dividend of five percent.” His oldest sons, Alvin, Robert and Edward, now in their early twenties, began to work for the brewery in 1896. Robbie quickly became more involved with his father’s real estate interests, but died in 1900.<sup>11</sup> Eddie was clearly intended to be the brewer. He was appointed a board member in 1896 and took charge of bottling. The following year, he was appointed acting vice president. In 1898 he enrolled at one of the two brewers’ schools in Chicago, the Siebel Institute or the Wahl-Henius Institute.<sup>12</sup> “At present I do not go to Alexandria very often,” Portner wrote in 1897, “I want Eddie to have the opportunity to conduct the business alone.” But, at least initially, he was a source of disappointment to his father. Concerned that he was nearing the end of his life, Robert Portner commented in 1903 that he was not very satisfied with his son’s performance as heir apparent. Nonetheless, Eddie assumed the

<sup>10</sup> Westelaken may have been assisted by his son Frank, a 24-year-old graduate of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and of, with a score of 99 percent, “the First Scientific Station [for] the Art of Brewing” in New York. Anton Schwarz was director of this latter research institute and academy. Frank von de Westelaken was brought into the brewery as a clerk about 1909, before he earned his brewing degree. A top student athlete, he pitched for the baseball team made up of Portner’s clerks. He left town to look for work in Milwaukee in 1911 and returned the following year. The Portner brewery’s final brewmaster is still unknown. (*Washington Post* August 17, 1909 and July 27, 1912)

<sup>11</sup> Robbie began working from the office at the Portner Flats in Washington (see Chapter 12).

<sup>12</sup> Not only did the brewing industry advance scientifically in the nineteenth century, but the propagation of such knowledge was increasingly through professional journals and the several new brewing schools, the Siebel Institute of Technology (founded 1867), the United States Brewers’ Academy (1880), the Wahl-Henius Institute (*circa* 1890), the American Brewing Academy (1891), and Anton Schwarz’s “First Scientific Station.”



presidency upon the death of his father, and he and brothers Alvin and Paul carried on the business thereafter. (Portner n.d.:30-31,33,34; Richmond & Company 1897; J.H. Chataigne & Co. 1897; W.L. Richmond 1907; Hill Directory Company 1915c; Alexandria Corporation Court Charter Book 3)

*Portrait of president and chairman Robert Portner, early 1890s, as published in One Hundred Years of Brewing, 1903.*



Between 1875 and 1916 the brewery also employed a substantial number of managers in its far-flung depots. While they were not exactly autonomous—close coordination with the Alexandria plant was crucial to balance supply with demand—these agents had to demonstrate leadership and organizational competence. After all, by 1880 most of the market for Portner's beer was beyond Alexandria and, by 1883, most of the brewery's workers were employed out of town as well. The men who managed the crews of bottlers, laborers, drivers, and bill collectors in the Southern depots came from a variety of backgrounds. Some had been independent bottlers bought out by Portner but kept on for their expertise. Charles T. Brown, a Danville, Virginia bottler, may have been a wholesaler for Portner's products before 1888, when the brewer purchased his plant. But Brown remained on the payroll as manager of the Richmond depot from 1895 to 1902 and the Norfolk depot from 1909 to 1910. Irishman Edward Sheehan gave up his Excelsior Bottling Works in Augusta, Georgia to run the Portner branch there, before returning to bottling and saloon-keeping. Other branch chiefs were trusted long-time employees. Robert Bell, Jr. was a brewery foreman who was sent to establish the Norfolk depot in 1876. After he left the company, the turnover rate for the Norfolk management was among the highest of all the depots. Charles G. Herbort, the first Augusta, Georgia branch superintendent and later Richmond branch manager, was one of the original company board members. On the other hand, some branch managers had no prior experience with brewing or bottling. Rudolph Gebner, agent for the Washington, D.C. depot from 1883 to 1886, had been a hotel clerk in the early 1870s, then worked his way up as secretary, chancellor, vice consul and acting consul in Washington for the Swiss government. After leaving the employ of the brewery, he returned to the hospitality industry. Another man with a colorful background was Emil Kuhlbank. Born at Halle,

Westphalia in the mid 1850s, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy as a teenager, before returning to Prussia and purportedly serving in the Imperial bodyguard. After his second arrival on U.S. shores he joined the Portner company to become depot manager at Richmond and at Wilmington. (*Washington Herald* March 11, 1910)

Like Charles Brown and Charles Herbolt, several men ran more than one branch in succession or also served the firm in other capacities. Otto Banck, for instance, was superintendent of the Augusta branch, then the Charleston depot. Dennis Cowhig was a clerk at Orange, Virginia, agent at Charlottesville, Virginia, and the sole manager of the Hagerstown, Maryland depot from 1907 to 1916. Tuckerman J. Fuqua was depot manager at Newport News, Virginia, Raleigh, North Carolina, and finally, Winchester, Virginia. C.F. Joyce was at Greensboro, North Carolina then Danville, Virginia. William H. Shelton clerked at Richmond before a promotion to manage the Phoebus, Virginia branch. Alexandrian John J. Nugent was a branch agent at Augusta, Georgia but returned home to serve as a salesman and collector. Most of these capable men lost their positions as Prohibition rolled through the company's market area in the decade before 1916. One "survivor" was Christian Valaer, Robert Portner's brother-in-law, who took ownership of the Charlotte depot he had managed since 1889 and manufactured only soda pop and distilled water once Prohibition commenced in North Carolina in 1908. He also served as a director on the company's board during the late 1880s. Not all managers were competent or trustworthy men. For whatever reasons, the tenures of some, such as James R. Warfield (Frederick, Maryland, 1897) and George N. Beaton (Norfolk, Virginia, 1903-1904), were very short-lived. The Salisbury, North Carolina branch was perhaps the least well served. Two superintendents in succession, W.W. Manly (1903-1906) and Robert R. Taylor (1906-1907) each embezzled hundreds of dollars from the operation. Manly absconded, and Taylor, a twenty-year employee of the company, was jailed. (*Washington Post* December 18, 1906; *The Landmark* August 23, 1907 and August 30, 1907)

*An early twentieth-century postcard of Christian Valaer's home in Charlotte, North Carolina. The former Robert Portner Brewing Company depot—which became Valaer's soda bottling company—stood behind the house.*



<b>Company officers and board members</b>	<b>Approximate Tenure</b>
Robert Portner, president and chairman	1883-1906
Edward G. Portner, president and chairman	1906-1909
Alvin O. Portner, president and chairman	1909-1916
Paul Muhlhauser, vice president and director	1883-1890
John M. Leicht, vice president and director	1891-1896
Edward G. Portner, vice president and director	1897-1906
Alvin O. Portner, vice president and director	1906-1909
Paul V. Portner, vice president and director	1909-1916
Carl A. Strangmann, secretary-treasurer and director	1883-1895
Percy McKnight Baldwin, secretary-treasurer and director	1895-1915
George H. Beuchert, secretary-treasurer	1915-1916
John T. Johnson, assistant secretary-treasurer	1900-1910
George H. Beuchert, assistant secretary-treasurer	1910-1915
Bette Edward Julius Eils, director	1883-1886
Charles Gustave Herbort, director	1883-1888
Frank P. Madigan, general manager and director	1890-1895
Christian Valaer, director	1889-1905
<b>Depot managers</b>	<b>Approximate Tenure</b>
Otto Portner, Washington, DC	1875-1880
Rudolph Gebner, Washington, DC	1883-1886
Frank P. Madigan, Washington, DC	1886-1890
Robert Bell, Jr., Norfolk, Virginia	1876-1880
Bartholomew R. Summers, Norfolk, Virginia	1880-1883
Charles P. Brown, Norfolk, Virginia	1883-1884
Ferdinand Pagenstecher, Norfolk, Virginia	1884-1885
David R. Dunn, Norfolk, Virginia	1885-1891
Henry W. Bissing, Norfolk, Virginia	1891-1892
George O'Neill Palmer, Norfolk, Virginia	1892-1899
George W. Bethell, Norfolk, Virginia	1899-1903
George N. Beaton, Norfolk, Virginia	1903-1904
John Bradbury, Norfolk, Virginia	1904-1905
Charles C. Finch, Norfolk, Virginia	1905-1909
Charles T. Brown, Norfolk, Virginia	1909-1910
Edmond Eugene George, Norfolk, Virginia	1910-1916
Charles Gustave Herbort, Lynchburg, Virginia	1879-1881
Thomas H. Giles, Lynchburg, Virginia	1881-1883
Charles Gustave Herbort, Lynchburg, Virginia	1883-1886

William W. Whyte, Lynchburg, Virginia	1886-1889
James M. McLaughlin, Lynchburg, Virginia	1890-1891
Oden B. Jester, Lynchburg, Virginia	1892-1895
Robert C. Strangmann, Lynchburg, Virginia	1895-1896
Edwin D. Wills, Lynchburg, Virginia	1897-1899
Christian Valaer, Charlotte, North Carolina	1889-1905
Charles Gustave Herbort, Augusta, Georgia	1881-1882
Thomas E. Wallace, Augusta, Georgia	1882-1884
C. Otto Banck, Augusta, Georgia	1884-1890
John T. Palmer, Augusta, Georgia	1890-1892
Edward Sheehan, Augusta, Georgia	1892-1901
John J. Nugent, Augusta, Georgia	1901-1906
George M. Overton, Augusta, Georgia	1906-1907
Christian Frissius, Goldsboro, North Carolina	1882-
C.F. Joyce, Danville, Virginia	1888-1890
T.D. Tebbetts, Danville, Virginia	1891-
John W. Gibson, Danville, Virginia	1900-1916
Charles Gustave Herbort, Richmond, Virginia	1886-1888
Patrick McDonough, Richmond, Virginia	1888-1892
Emil Kuhblank, Richmond, Virginia	1892-1895
Charles T. Brown, Richmond, Virginia	1895-1902
Edwin C. Payne, Richmond, Virginia	1902-1904
Richard W. Payne, Richmond, Virginia	1904-1916
Thomas R. Jones, Raleigh, North Carolina	1899-1901
Tuckerman John Fuqua, Raleigh, North Carolina	1902-1905
William H. Shelton, Phoebus, Virginia	1890-1894
Alexander M. Hanger, Phoebus, Virginia	1896-1916
Emil Kuhblank, Wilmington, North Carolina	1888-1891
C. Otto Banck, Wilmington, North Carolina	1895-1905
John T. Newman, Wilmington, North Carolina	1906-1909
C. Otto Banck, Charleston, South Carolina	1891-1893
Tuckerman John Fuqua, Newport News, Virginia	1899-1901
George F. Payne, Newport News, Virginia	1901-1916
George P. Carr, Roanoke, Virginia	1893-1900
Charles Sidney Johnson, Roanoke, Virginia	1900-1916
William Koenig, Petersburg, Virginia	1896-1916

James R. Warfield, Frederick, Maryland	1897
Robert C. Strangmann, Frederick, Maryland	1898-1905
C.F. Joyce, Greensboro, North Carolina	<i>circa</i> 1892
Daniel Huffines, Greensboro, North Carolina	1900-1906
William W. Payne, Charlottesville, Virginia	1904-1905
Dennis G. Cowhig, Charlottesville, Virginia	1906-1907
Charles H. van Valkenberg, Staunton, Virginia	1902-1911
Andrew Bell, Staunton, Virginia	1912-1916
W.W. Manly, Salisbury, North Carolina	1902-1906
Robert R. Taylor, Salisbury, North Carolina	1906-1907
Tuckerman John Fuqua, Hagerstown, Maryland	1907-1908
Dennis G. Cowhig, Hagerstown, Maryland	1908-1916
W.L. Fultz, Winchester, Virginia	1908-1916?